

## 2 Samuel 23 - Thursday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015

1 Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse; Thus says the man raised up on high, The anointed of the God of Jacob, And the sweet psalmist of Israel:

- I find it interesting that David would refer to himself first and foremost as the son of Jesse, and as the sweet psalmist of Israel.
- The reason this is interesting is that David could've referred to himself as a giant slayer, and the greatest king in Israel's history.
- To me, this speaks to David's character and humility, such that he wanted the Lord to be the only one who received the glory.

- It's also interesting to note we're told these are the last words of David. This does not mean these are the last words he spoke.
- Rather, it means these are the last poetic words he composed, which is even more interesting as it relates to David's humility.
- It seems that the last poetic words that David, as the sweet psalmist of Israel, wanted recorded were that of God's goodness.

Adam Clarke - "I suppose the last poetical composition is here intended. He might have spoken many words after these in prose, but none in verse."

2 "The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue. 3 The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me: 'He who rules over men must be just, Ruling in the fear of God.

- Here David makes it very clear in no uncertain terms that the Spirit of the Lord spoke to him and His word was on his tongue.
- He then says the Lord spoke to him saying, that in order for a man to rule over men, he must be just, ruling in the fear of God.
- In other words, if you rule in the fear of God, you'll be just in your rule over men as a result. This is a must for any in leadership.

I like how one commentator said it, "This is the key to justice in the work of a leader. When leaders rule in the fear of God they recognize that a God of justice reviews their work and will require an accounting of how the ruler has led."

4 And he shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, A morning without clouds, Like the tender grass springing out of the earth, By clear shining after rain.' 5 "Although my house is not so with God, Yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant, Ordered in all things and secure. For this is all my salvation and all my desire; Will He not make it increase? 6 But the sons of rebellion shall all be as thorns thrust away, Because they cannot be taken with hands. 7 But the man who touches them Must be armed with iron and the shaft of a spear, And they shall be utterly burned with fire in their place."

- This is what I love about the life of David, in spite of all his sin and failure; God still blessed him with an everlasting covenant.
- Namely, the Savior of the world would come from his lineage. God's blessing on David wasn't predicated on the sin of David.
- So too is this true for us, it's all of grace, we're saved by grace through faith it's not of works it's a gift, lest anyone should boast.

G. Campbell Morgan - "In the Divine dealing with us, there is no mistake, no lapse. Nothing has been permitted which has not been made to serve the highest purpose. This is so even of our failures, if, like David, in true penitence we have forsaken them and confessed them. It is certainly so of all our sorrows and trials."

8 These are the names of the mighty men whom David had: Josheb-Basshebeth the Tachmonite, chief among the captains. He was called Adino the Eznite, because he had killed eight hundred men at one time.

- We're now being introduced to the mighty men of David, starting with this Adino, the Eznite, who you don't want to mess with.
- This too speaks to David's humility in the sense that as a leader, he knew that he needed these great men surrounding him.
- It's important to understand whom these men were when they first came to David. They were in debt and they were out laws.

Charles Spurgeon - "These men came to David when his fortunes were at the lowest ebb, and he himself was regarded as a rebel and an outlaw, and they remained faithful to him throughout their lives. Happy are they who can follow a good cause in its worst estate, for theirs is true glory."

9 And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. 10 He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder.

- The detail we're given here about this Eleazar is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is he didn't retreat.
- I don't know if one could ever understate how important it is for us as Christians to stand firm in spiritual battle and not retreat.
- Another interesting detail that's given is that his hand stuck to the sword until the Lord brought about a great victory that day.

- I can't think of a better picture of how it is that we're to stick to the sword of God's Word, which Paul calls the sword of the spirit.
- I suppose it may go without saying, but we have no hope of ever knowing victory in spiritual battle absent the sword of the spirit.
- It was the Word of God that Jesus resisted the Devil with. Jesus didn't retreat, instead, the Word of God made the devil flee.

Charles Spurgeon - "Remember Mr. Sankey's hymn,—'Dare to be a Daniel! Dare to stand alone! Dare to have a purpose firm! Dare to make it known!' Dare to be an Eleazar, and go forth and smite the Philistines alone; you will soon find that there are others in the house who have concealed their sentiments, but when they see, you coming forward, they will be openly on the Lord's side. Many cowards are skulking about, try to shame them. Many are undecided, let them see a brave man, and he will be the standard-bearer around whom they will rally."

11 And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines. 12 But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.

- Here we're introduced to Shammah who stationed himself in the middle of the field and defended it when everyone else fled.
- It seems he was unwilling to let the Philistines have a field that did not belong to them, but instead belonged to the Israelites.
- What's interesting is he stood alone for what he knew was right in God's site and as such God brought about a great victory.

13 Then three of the thirty chief men went down at harvest time and came to David at the cave of Adullam. And the troop of Philistines encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. 14 David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. 15 And David said with longing, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" 16 So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. 17 And he said, "Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is this not the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. These things were done by the three mighty men.

- At first read, this may seem a little confusing especially when David doesn't drink the water the three men risked their lives for.
- However, upon closer examination, you realize that though these men wanted to bless their leader, David couldn't receive it.
- It's for this reason that he pours it out as unto the Lord as a gesture of honor, towards these three men, and towards the Lord.

Of this one commentator wrote, "Accounting it too dear a draught for himself, he poured it out unto the Lord, out of a religious respect."

18 Now Abishai the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief of another three. He lifted his spear against three hundred men, killed them, and won a name among these three. 19 Was he not the most honored of three? Therefore he became their captain. However, he did not attain to the first three. 20 Benaiah was the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man from Kabzeel, who had done many deeds. He had killed two lion-like heroes of Moab. He also had gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day. 21 And he killed an Egyptian, a spectacular man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand; so he went down to him with a staff, wrested the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. 22 These things Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and won a name among three mighty men. 23 He was more honored than the thirty, but he did not attain to the first three. And David appointed him over his guard.

- There's something I want to point out here that isn't easy to see at first and it has to do with this mention of "honored of three."
- Notice that we're only given the names of two of the three. The question is, why don't we have the name of the third of three.
- The thought is that the third man was Joab but his name isn't listed because he defied David's command and killed Absalom.

24 Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, 25 Shammah the Harodite, Elikai the Harodite, 26 Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkeish the Tekoite, 27 Abiezer the Anathothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, 28 Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite, 29 Heleb the son of Baanah (the Netophathite), Ittai the son of Ribai from Gibeath of the children of Benjamin, 30 Benaiah a Pirathonite, Hiddai from the brooks of Gaash, 31 Abi-Albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, 32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite (of the sons of Jashen), Jonathan, 33 Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, 34 Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, 35 Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, 36 Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, 37 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite (armorbearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah), 38 Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, 39 and Uriah the Hittite: thirty-seven in all.

- The chapter ends by listing the thirty-seven names of David's mighty men. I would suggest these mighty men were great men.
- I'll take it a step further and suggest not only were these men great men, they were a testimony to how David was a great man.

G. Campbell Morgan - "More than all his victories against outside foes, the influence of his life and character on the men nearest to him testify to his essential greatness."